

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF NEW MEXICO**

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

*Plaintiff,*

v.

**Civ. No. 1:19-cv-193**

\$13,800.00 IN UNITED STATES CURRENCY,

*Defendant-in-rem.*

**VERIFIED COMPLAINT FOR FORFEITURE *IN REM***

Plaintiff, United States of America, brings this complaint in accordance with Supplemental Rule G(2) of the Supplemental Rules for Certain Admiralty or Maritime Claims and Asset Forfeiture Actions, and alleges as follows:

**NATURE OF THE ACTION**

1. This is a civil action to forfeit and condemn to the use and benefit of the United States of America property involved in violations of the Controlled Substances Act that is subject to forfeiture pursuant to 21 U.S.C. § 881(a)(6).

**DEFENDANT *IN REM***

2. The defendant *in rem* consists of the following:
- i. Thirteen thousand Eight hundred (\$13,800.00) in United States Currency, (hereafter referred to as “Defendant Currency”).
3. The Defendant Currency was seized by the Drug Enforcement Administration on March 8, 2018, in the District of New Mexico.
4. The Defendant Currency is now, and during the pendency of this action will be, in the jurisdiction of this Court.

**JURISDICTION AND VENUE**

5. The United States District Court for the District of New Mexico has subject matter jurisdiction under 28 U.S.C. §§ 1345, 1355(a) and 1356.

6. Venue for this civil forfeiture action is proper in this district pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 1355 and 1395, as acts or omissions giving rise to the forfeiture took place in this district and the property is found in this district. Upon the filing of this complaint, the Defendant Currency will be arrested by execution of a Warrant for Arrest *In Rem* in the District of New Mexico.

**FACTS**

7. From March 8, 2018 through October 26, 2018, Drug Enforcement Administration, (DEA), Agents from the Denver Office and the Albuquerque Office conducted an investigation into a multi-kilogram cocaine and multi-pound methamphetamine distributor in the Denver, Colorado area.

8. On October 29, 2018, Albuquerque DEA Task Force Officer F. Chavez obtained Federal Search and Seizure Warrant 18-MR-1006 for the property located at 17 Las Estrellas, Santa Fe, New Mexico, 87507 residence of Javier Araiza-Gonzalez and Concepcion Cordova.

9. On October 31, 2018, Warrant 18-MR-1006 was executed by the Region 1 Task Force Officers and the DEA. Present in the residence were Javier Araiza-Gonzales, Concepcion Cordova and, Maria de Jesus Cordova-Perez. During the search, the Agents located \$13,800.00 in U.S. Currency. \$11,797.00 of the currency was contained in a heat sealed plastic bag and concealed above bathroom cabinets, and \$2,003.00 of the currency was in the front pants pockets of Javier Araiza-Gonzales.

10. Javier Araiza-Gonzales claimed that the money was going to be used to pay off his 2015 GMC Sierra truck. Javier Araiza-Gonzales then changed his statement and said he was saving the money in case he was deported to Mexico due to a DWI arrest.

11. Javier Araiza-Gonzalez claimed that he earns \$450.00 weekly as co-owner of a local restaurant, Pizza Etc. in Santa Fe, New Mexico. He stated his monthly truck payment was \$610.00, and that his monthly mobile home payment was \$250.00. Javier Araiza-Gonzalez claimed that his residence had been paid off and that he paid \$90,000.00 for his lot.

12. Concepcion Cordova stated that she and Javier Araiza-Gonzalez paid \$135,000.00 for the lot and \$40,000.00 for a GMC Sierra for which they owed \$20,000.00.

13. A drug detection canine subsequently alerted positively for the odor of illegal controlled substance on the currency.

14. Javier Araiza-Gonzales has a criminal and drug history.

**FIRST CLAIM FOR RELIEF**

15. The United States incorporates by reference the allegations in paragraphs 1 through 14 as though fully set forth.

16. Title 21, United States Code, Section 881(a)(6) subjects to forfeiture “[a]ll moneys, negotiable instruments, securities, or other things of value furnished or intended to be furnished by any person in exchange for a controlled substance or listed chemical in violation of this subchapter, all proceeds traceable to such an exchange, and all moneys, negotiable instruments, and securities used or intended to be used to facilitate any violation of this subchapter.”

17. Defendant Currency was furnished, or intended to be furnished, in exchange for a controlled substance, or constitutes proceeds traceable to such an exchange, or was used or

intended to be used or facilitate a violation of the Controlled Substances Act and is thus subject to forfeiture to the United States pursuant to 21 U.S.C § 881(a)(6).

WHEREFORE: Plaintiff seeks arrest of Defendant Currency and forfeiture of same to Plaintiff, determination of the validity and priority of claims of the Claimants and any Unknown Claimants to the Defendant Currency costs and expenses of seizure and of this proceeding, and other proper relief.

Respectfully submitted,

JOHN C. ANDERSON  
United States Attorney

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. R. Kotz', is written over the printed name of Stephen R. Kotz.

STEPHEN R. KOTZ  
Assistant U.S. Attorney  
P.O. Box 607  
Albuquerque, NM 87103  
(505) 346-7274

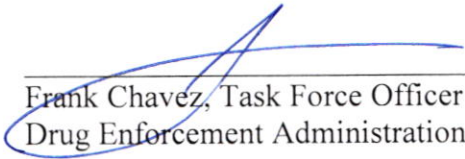
**28 U.S.C. § 1746 DECLARATION**

I am a Special Agent with the Drug Enforcement Administration who has read the contents of the Complaint for Forfeiture *In Rem* to which this Declaration is attached; and the statements contained in the complaint are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

I declare under penalty of perjury and the laws of the United States of America that this Declaration is true and correct, except as to matters stated on information and belief, and as to those matters I believe them to be true.

Dated:

3/6/2019

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Frank Chavez, Task Force Officer  
Drug Enforcement Administration



**I. (a) PLAINTIFFS**

United States of America

(b) County of Residence of First Listed Plaintiff \_\_\_\_\_  
(EXCEPT IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES)

(c) Attorneys (Firm Name, Address, and Telephone Number)

**DEFENDANTS**

\$13,800.00 IN UNITED STATES CURRENCY

County of Residence of First Listed Defendant \_\_\_\_\_  
(IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES ONLY)NOTE: IN LAND CONDEMNATION CASES, USE THE LOCATION OF  
THE TRACT OF LAND INVOLVED.

Attorneys (If Known)

**II. BASIS OF JURISDICTION** (Place an "X" in One Box Only)

- ☒ 1 U.S. Government Plaintiff
- ☐ 2 U.S. Government Defendant
- ☐ 3 Federal Question  
(U.S. Government Not a Party)
- ☐ 4 Diversity  
(Indicate Citizenship of Parties in Item III)

**III. CITIZENSHIP OF PRINCIPAL PARTIES** (Place an "X" in One Box for Plaintiff and One Box for Defendant)

- |   | PTF                        | DEF                        |   | PTF                        | DEF                        |
|---|----------------------------|----------------------------|---|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Citizen of This State                   | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | Incorporated or Principal Place of Business In This State     | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 |
| Citizen of Another State                | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | Incorporated and Principal Place of Business In Another State | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| Citizen or Subject of a Foreign Country | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | Foreign Nation  | <input type="checkbox"/> 6 | <input type="checkbox"/> 6 |

CONTRACT	TORTS	FORFEITURE/PENALTY	BANKRUPTCY	OTHER STATUTES
<input type="checkbox"/> 110 Insurance <input type="checkbox"/> 120 Marine <input type="checkbox"/> 130 Miller Act <input type="checkbox"/> 140 Negotiable Instrument <input type="checkbox"/> 150 Recovery of Overpayment & Enforcement of Judgment <input type="checkbox"/> 151 Medicare Act <input type="checkbox"/> 152 Recovery of Defaulted Student Loans (Excludes Veterans) <input type="checkbox"/> 153 Recovery of Overpayment of Veteran's Benefits <input type="checkbox"/> 160 Stockholders' Suits <input type="checkbox"/> 190 Other Contract <input type="checkbox"/> 195 Contract Product Liability <input type="checkbox"/> 196 Franchise	<b>PERSONAL INJURY</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 310 Airplane <input type="checkbox"/> 315 Airplane Product Liability <input type="checkbox"/> 320 Assault, Libel & Slander <input type="checkbox"/> 330 Federal Employers' Liability <input type="checkbox"/> 340 Marine <input type="checkbox"/> 345 Marine Product Liability <input type="checkbox"/> 350 Motor Vehicle <input type="checkbox"/> 355 Motor Vehicle Product Liability <input type="checkbox"/> 360 Other Personal Injury <input type="checkbox"/> 362 Personal Injury - Medical Malpractice	<input type="checkbox"/> 625 Drug Related Seizure of Property 21 USC 881 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 690 Other	<input type="checkbox"/> 422 Appeal 28 USC 158 <input type="checkbox"/> 423 Withdrawal 28 USC 157 <b>PROPERTY RIGHTS</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 820 Copyrights <input type="checkbox"/> 830 Patent <input type="checkbox"/> 840 Trademark	<input type="checkbox"/> 375 False Claims Act <input type="checkbox"/> 400 State Reapportionment <input type="checkbox"/> 410 Antitrust <input type="checkbox"/> 430 Banks and Banking <input type="checkbox"/> 450 Commerce <input type="checkbox"/> 460 Deportation <input type="checkbox"/> 470 Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations <input type="checkbox"/> 480 Consumer Credit <input type="checkbox"/> 490 Cable/Sat TV <input type="checkbox"/> 850 Securities/Commodities/Exchange <input type="checkbox"/> 890 Other Statutory Actions <input type="checkbox"/> 891 Agricultural Acts <input type="checkbox"/> 893 Environmental Matters <input type="checkbox"/> 895 Freedom of Information Act <input type="checkbox"/> 896 Arbitration <input type="checkbox"/> 899 Administrative Procedure Act/Review or Appeal of Agency Decision <input type="checkbox"/> 950 Constitutionality of State Statutes
<b>REAL PROPERTY</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 210 Land Condemnation <input type="checkbox"/> 220 Foreclosure <input type="checkbox"/> 230 Rent Lease & Ejectment <input type="checkbox"/> 240 Torts to Land <input type="checkbox"/> 245 Tort Product Liability <input type="checkbox"/> 290 All Other Real Property	<b>CIVIL RIGHTS</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 440 Other Civil Rights <input type="checkbox"/> 441 Voting <input type="checkbox"/> 442 Employment <input type="checkbox"/> 443 Housing/Accommodations <input type="checkbox"/> 445 Amer. w/Disabilities - Employment <input type="checkbox"/> 446 Amer. w/Disabilities - Other <input type="checkbox"/> 448 Education	<b>PRISONER PETITIONS</b> <b>Habeas Corpus:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 463 Alien Detainee <input type="checkbox"/> 510 Motions to Vacate Sentence <input type="checkbox"/> 530 General <input type="checkbox"/> 535 Death Penalty <b>Other:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 540 Mandamus & Other <input type="checkbox"/> 550 Civil Rights <input type="checkbox"/> 555 Prison Condition <input type="checkbox"/> 560 Civil Detainee - Conditions of	<b>LABOR</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 710 Fair Labor Standards Act <input type="checkbox"/> 720 Labor/Management Relations <input type="checkbox"/> 740 Railway Labor Act <input type="checkbox"/> 751 Family and Medical Leave Act <input type="checkbox"/> 790 Other Labor Litigation <input type="checkbox"/> 791 Employee Retirement Income Security Act <b>IMMIGRATION</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 462 Naturalization Application <input type="checkbox"/> 465 Other Immigration Actions	<b>SOCIAL SECURITY</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 861 HIA (1395ff) <input type="checkbox"/> 862 Black Lung (923) <input type="checkbox"/> 863 DIWC/DIWW (405(g)) <input type="checkbox"/> 864 SSID Title XVI <input type="checkbox"/> 865 RSI (405(g)) <b>FEDERAL TAX SUITS</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 870 Taxes (U.S. Plaintiff or Defendant) <input type="checkbox"/> 871 IRS—Third Party 26 USC 7609

**IV. NATURE OF SUIT** (Place an "X" in One Box Only)**V. ORIGIN** (Place an "X" in One Box Only)

- ☒ 1 Original Proceeding    ☐ 2 Removed from State Court    ☐ 3 Remanded from Appellate Court    ☐ 4 Reinstated or Reopened    ☐ 5 Transferred from Another District (specify)    ☐ 6 Multidistrict Litigation

Cite the U.S. Civil Statute under which you are filing (Do not cite jurisdictional statutes unless diversity):

21 U.S.C. § 881(a)(6)

Brief description of cause:

**VI. CAUSE OF ACTION****VII. REQUESTED IN**☐ CHECK IF THIS IS A CLASS ACTION

DEMAND \$

CHECK YES only if demanded in complaint:

**COMPLAINT:**

UNDER RULE 23, F.R.Cv.P.

JURY DEMAND: ☐ Yes ☐ No**VIII. RELATED CASE(S) IF ANY**

(See instructions):

JUDGE

DOCKET NUMBER

DATE

SIGNATURE OF ATTORNEY OF RECORD

3/4/2019

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

RECEIPT #

AMOUNT

APPLYING IFP

JUDGE

MAG. JUDGE